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St. Albans Under the Stars: Connecting the Community to the Universe

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St. Albans Under the Stars (SUTS) is a community-based program organized in 2006 for the purpose of promoting fun science projects in underserved communities, and to assist in college readiness initiatives. The public outreach program has three components: 1) Solar observing with a PST telescope, 2) Engaging hands-on activities for all ages, and 3) Night observing with an 8" Celestron telescope and a host of other amateur astronomers participating in the program with their telescopes, all aimed at different objects visible in the night sky. There is a mobile unit part that has traveled in the past to minority communities in four states; Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, & Illinois using the same methods as used in New York to excite students about science. It is our aim to go national sharing astronomical knowledge while emphasizing the ancient, cultural, and inspirational value of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). We believe strongly in the need for more minority involvement in science fields. Thus, we encourage higher education as part of our effort to engage members of the community, young and "the young at heart" to participate in various introductory aspects of the project.